



RESOLUTION 2019-19

Relating to the Designation of the District's Public Safety Office
as a Law Enforcement Agency

WHEREAS:

1. Eugene School District 4J has a Public Safety Office that supports the safety and security of students and schools;
2. Oregon law requires districts to conduct criminal background checks and/or fingerprinting on volunteers, contractors and non-licensed staff who will have direct, unsupervised contact with students;
3. Oregon State Police (OSP) maintains a comprehensive criminal offender information system known as the Law Enforcement Data System (LEDS), and OSP is able to provide LEDS access to a law enforcement agency pursuant to an interagency agreement;
4. Oregon law provides that district school boards may establish a law enforcement agency and employ persons, including sworn peace officers, necessary to protect the safety of district students and staff, and the security of district property;
5. It is most efficient and cost-effective for the district to conduct criminal background checks using the criminal offender information system established by the Oregon State Police; and
6. Designating the district's Public Safety Office as a law enforcement agency will support student and staff safety by enabling the district to have better and faster access to information.

SO BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

1. As allowed by ORS 332.531, the board hereby designates the district's Public Safety Office as a law enforcement agency, solely for the purpose of improving information access, to protect the safety of school district staff and students on district premises and the security of district property.
2. The Superintendent shall take all necessary steps to permit the sworn and non-sworn employees of the district's Public Safety Office to have access to the Law Enforcement Data System (LEDS) and to use such information for the safety and security of students and staff as permitted by law and board policy, including the completion of legally mandated criminal history records checks for employees, contractors and volunteers.
3. The Superintendent will develop administrative regulations to carry out this resolution and meet the requirements of applicable laws.

Signed: _____
School Board Chair

Date: _____



ITEM FOR ACTION (Second Read)

Date

June 19, 2019

Title

Approve Board Resolution to Improve Access and Efficiency of Safety Information by Designating the District's Public Safety Office as a Law Enforcement Agency

Presenters

Cydney Vandercar and Kerry Delf

Description

To support the safety and security of Eugene School District 4J's students and schools, the district has established a district Public Safety Office, a Safety Officer, and safety measures such as emergency procedures, training and drills, and staff and volunteer background checks.

The Public Safety Office's responsibilities include completing legally required criminal background checks for non-licensed employees, volunteers and contractors who will have direct, unsupervised access to students. Criminal background checks for volunteers are currently completed using an online vendor which is paid on a fee basis and provides limited information.

Oregon law provides that the state police department may enter into agreements with law enforcement agencies to allow access to state and national criminal offender information systems. Oregon law also allows school districts to establish a law enforcement agency within the district and to employ staff as peace officers when carrying out their duties of employment. The district's Public Safety Office therefore may be designated as a law enforcement agency to enable direct access to criminal offender data systems for purposes such as background checks.

Having direct access to these data systems would be more efficient and effective for screening potential volunteers and non-licensed employees, as well as more cost-effective. Employment of a sworn peace officer in the district's Public Safety Office additionally would support student and staff safety by improving district access to timely information and enhancing coordination with local law enforcement agencies.

Designating the district's Public Safety Office as a law enforcement agency is not planned to change the district's long-established partnership with the Eugene Police Department to provide the School Resource Officers program, which is overseen by the district Safety Officer. The SRO program has four specialized police officers and a sergeant working full-time in our schools (a fifth School Resource Officer is assigned to the Bethel School District). District administrators and Eugene Police collaborate and make decisions together in all areas for student safety and supports and a culturally responsive, preventive and restorative justice approach.

The proposed Resolution No. 2019-19 would formally designate the district's Public Safety Office as a law enforcement agency for the purpose of supporting the safety of students and staff and the security of district property, and direct the superintendent to take all necessary steps to permit the district's Public Safety Office to have access to the criminal information systems made available through the Oregon State Police.

Recommendation

The superintendent recommends approval of Resolution No. 2019-19, Relating to the Designation of the District's Public Safety Office as a Law Enforcement Agency, in order to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the district's criminal background check systems and support the safety of our students.